New Master plan for Delhi

1070. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVE LOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new master plan on building bye laws introduced for Delhi 2001 were never circulated for public objections;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of the provisions of the new master plan are affecting the building activities in Delhi; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to make changes in the master plan for Delhi 2001?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEV-ELOPMENT (SHRI DAULAT RAM SARAN): (a) Modifications in the Development code of Master Plan for Delhi were made after due notice to the public and after considering objections and suggestions received in response thereto.

(b) The building activity in Delhi is to be regulated as per the provisions contained in the Development code.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Movement 0f essential commodities affected by political communal turm-oil in the country

1071. SHRI G. G. SWELL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUP PLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether movement of essential commodities has been adversely affected by political/communal turmoil in the country;

(b) whether the North East because of the long haul from sources of supply, a narrow land conduit, scarcity and high cost of fuel, has suffered in particular;

(c) whether there is any scheme to ensure supplies to the North-East; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI SARWAR HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Though there have been difficulties in the movement of some essential commodities, specially petroleum products, their supplies to the State Government | UT Administrations including the North East, for distribution through public distribution system, were generally maintained.

(c) and (d) In view of the logistic situation and the difficult terrain in the North East, the Government makes special efforts to maintain supplies of essential commodities to the region, by resorting to alternative modes of transport when required.

Amendment to land ceiling Acts of the States

1072. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether High Powered Committee on agriculture has suggested that the Land Ceiling Acts of the States should be suitably amended to bring not only more areas under cultivation but also to permit those who cultivate such lands to retain the half;

(b) if so, what are the other re-commendations made by the Committee; and

(c) to what extent Government are considering the recommendations of the committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAM BAHADUR SINGH): (a) The High Powered Committee on Agricultural Policies and Programmes has suggested that agriculture land ceiling Acts should be amended to provide that any on$_e$ who brings under productive cultivation any culturable land, which had been lying barren and unproductive during preceding 6 years, will be allowed to retain 50

per cent of the reclaimed land exempt from ceiling acts, if he surrenders 5 per cent for redistribution among the landless.

(b) The Committee has given a large number of recommendations. The main reommendations relate to farm price policy, alternative food security system, new strategy for increasing production, inccomes and employment in agricultural sector, export of farm products better use of land and water resources, declaring resources, declaring agriculture as indusry and national agriculture policy.

In addition to the (a) above the following recommendations /observations pertaining to the land reforms policy of the Government hav$_e$ been made by the Committee.

1. Agricultural Land Ceiling and Private Forest Acts should be suitably amended to enable the corporate sector to enter into the field of afforestation.

2 Land redistribution has failed to reduce the incidence of poverty and has effectively stopped additions to the net area sown.

3. Gram Sabha and Government lands which are without adequate cover should be leased to landless, other individuals, cooperatives, pub-lis sector corporations and private companies on the condition that ownership of the land will remain intact, while the trees and their produce will belong to those, who plant them.

4. The Land Acquisition Act should be amended so as to prevent acquisition of any farmer's agricultural land by which he becomes landless.

5. The consolidation of land holdings should be given top most priority..

(c) Government do not agree with the recommendations relating to amendment to the ceiling laws as they run counter to the national guidelines to the subject evolved after consultations with Chief Ministers. The recommendation relating to leasing of Gram Sabha and Government land to individuals (other than the landless rural poor), co-operatives, public sector corporations and private companies for plantation of trees also cannot be accepted as it should be against the interests of rural landless poor. However, a Tree Putta Scheme under which such lands can be allotted to landless rural poor subject to certain conditions is already being implemented by some States.

It does not seem possible to consider the suggested amendment to the Land Acquisition Act as it would be impractical and would create difficulties in acquisition of land for public purposes.

Consolidation of agricultural land holdings has been a component of land reforms policy of the Government and a number of States have been implementing this programme. However, land being a state subject, it is for the states to be convinced about the utility and desirability of taking up this programme.

Government also do not at all agree with the observation of Committee that land redistribution has made no impact on the incidence of poverty. While the area of surplus ceiling land distributed among the rural poor is not very large, it has definitely helped in improving the social and economic position of the beneficiaries whenever such distribution has taken place.

' The recommendations which do not relate to the land reforms policy of the Government are still.. under examination.